THE PORT FOLIO,

(NEW SERIES)

BY OLIVER OLDSCHOOL, ESQ.

Various, that the mind of desultory man, studious of change and pleased with novelty, may be indulged—Cowp.

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ORIGINAL PAPERS.

For The Port Folio.

TRAVELS.

LETTERS FROM GENEVA AND FRANCE.

Written during a residence of between two and three years in different parts of those countries, and addressed to a lady in Virginia.

(Continued from page 309.)

LETTER LV.

In a Latin distich, which is still to be read over the gateway of the Castle, it is pretended, that the Lords of Menthon were Barons before the Christian era. Without acquiescing in this extravagant claim, we may yet allow, that as long ago as the tenth century, they lived in all the dignity of feudal lords, surrounded by vassals, and exercising a species of sovereignty. It was in the year 928, that Bernard, the heir of Menthon, the future Saint, was born; and his father, with more attention to literature, than was common at that time, sent him to Paris, to complete his education, intending to devote him to the honourable profession of arms, and hoping, no doubt, that he would emulate the deeds of his grandfather, Olivier, *Compte du Genevois*, one of the companions of the immortal Charlemagne; but the good Baron committed the same mistake, which Lord Chesterfield did so many years after; he placed a governour over the person of his son, who, with many good qualities, was totally deficient in that species of merit, which the father was desirous his son should possess, and who even thought contemptuously of it; and we may judge of the father's mortification and astonishment, when his son returned from Paris, not burning with heroick zeal to signalize himself in arms, or singing the praises of Charlemagne, but quoting St. Nicholas, telling of visions he had seen, or voices he had heard, and talking of prayer and sacrifice, and prophecy and divination. The father hoped, that the

charms of beauty might dispel the infatuation of his son, and proposed an alliance for him, with the fair Marguaritte, the heiress of the ancient and noble house of Miolans; but a faint expression of admiration for the lady, and somewhat short of an absolute refusal, were all that could be obtained from the pious young man, who with horrour viewed the preparations that were made for his approaching nuptials, and observed that the fair Marguaritte, with her nearest relations, had been invited to Menthon, either because it was the custom of those days, or for the conveniency of some neighbouring chapel of peculiar sanctity.

The situation of Bernard was now not unlike that of Clarissa, and his expedient the same; having written a letter to his parents, in which he solicited their pardon, for an act of disobedience performed under the guidance and by the repeated injunctions of a higher authority, he boldly leaped, in the night, from his chamber-window; and the true believer, who goes to Menthon, may still, after a lapse of so many ages, perceive the impression of his footstep on the bare rock, full twenty feet below.

The authour, whose work is my authority on the present occasion, employs at least two pages, in describing the confusion that took place in the castle the next morning; the despair of the Baron and his Lady; the confusion of the fair Marguaritte; and the rage of every proud and valiant individual of the house of Miolans. But the deserted bride had the good sense and delicacy to interfere: she even declared herself satisfied, after a short struggle, with the reasons of the fugitive, and prevailed upon her relations to refrain from acts, which might have brought on a civil war, at a period, when every Baron looked for justice and satisfaction to his own sword, and to the united exertions of his kinsmen. She shortly after entered a society of nuns, and in time became their abbess, and was afterwards as renowned for her good government, and for her sanctity of manners, as she had been formerly celebrated for her beauty.

The Baron and his Lady, whose hearts were not as hard as those of the Harlow family, now began to reproach themselves for having driven their son into exile; they considered him, after a fruitless search, as lost to them forever, and secluding themselves from the world, they passed many years in sorrow and retirement at Menthon.

Desirous, at length, of making their final peace with heaven, they were induced, by the voice of Fame, to take a journey as far as Aoste, on the Italian side of the Alps, there to seek advice and consolation from a father of distinguished piety, who though originally a stranger and of unknown origin, had risen rapidly through all the various employments of the convent, to fill the office of Prior, exercising the most unbounded hospitality, and exerting himself in person at the head of his monks, to open the passage of the neighbouring mountain. The Romans, who had, in their time, made use of the same road from Italy into the Vallais, had erected a temple, on the highest part of the passage, and it was supposed that the demon, who had formerly inspired the oracle of Jupiter, had leagued himself with the wild beasts and robbers of the desert against all travellers and pilgrims who came

that way. You perceive, at once, that the holy man, whom the Baron and his Lady consulted, was no other than their son, and surely not even Priam at the feet of Achilles would afford a finer subject for a picture, than this aged couple, pouring out their hearts and telling their sad story to him, whose agitation must soon have betrayed him: after a few days, passed happily together, they parted, with mutual blessings and forgiveness; the parents to end their days in peace, and the son to continue his meritorious career. It was in honour of him that the mountain was called St. Bernard, and you must remember the account I have given you in a former letter, of the undistinguishing hospitality of the fathers, who reside there, and of the services rendered to Buonaparte, at the passage of his army.

We passed a day at Annecy, and then proceeded through a narrow, but well cultivated, valley by the Chateau of Thorens, to a great glass manufactory, which takes its name from the castle, and is situated at the extremity of a deep recess, overshadowed by lofty mountains.

The manufactory had been established by the Marquis de Salles, to whom the whole of the neighbouring country belonged, but a little time before the revolution; it had lately been put in complete order, but was not at this moment at work. As I knew that the clerk, who had purchased this part of the Marquis's estate, had behaved very handsomely upon the occasion, that he had gone into Piedmont at the risk of his life, and had made a proposal to the family of Salles, which, from a sense of allegiance to their sovereign, they did not feel themselves at liberty to accept, I looked at his improvements with pleasure, and sincerely wished him success.

As the woods recede, and that they do very rapidly, the proprietor is obliged to extend his causeways, which are not unlike our pole-bridges in South Carolina, and on these, which have all a gentle descent towards the glass-house, a labourer with ease draws a quarter of a cord of wood, in a small cart with iron wheels. One of these causeways extends to the distance of six miles, with but one interruption, from a precipice, where a slope, which, as the proprietor informed me, had cost £1000 sterling, had been prepared, and down this the wood, being taken out of the cart above and committed to its own weight, descended into the valley with frightful velocity.

I could not but envy a people, who, like those of Geneva, or of the neighbouring towns, have a cool, peaceful, and retired valley, to take refuge in, from the heat of summer and the cares of society; but even here, in this corner of the world, the inhabitants groan under the oppression of the conscription. If a conscript desert, and nothing is easier in Savoy than to seclude oneself from all possibility of discovery, the parents of the deserter are made responsible, the law calls upon them, most unjustly I think, for the exercise of an authority, which it allows them in no other instance; a fine of fifteen hundred livres is demanded, and guards are sent, who live at their expense, taking from time to time whatever can be converted into money, until the whole is paid, or until their means being exhausted, they leave their property in the hands of government, and go in quest of bread, or to die elsewhere. There were four families

in this afflicting situation in the valley of Thorens. From Thorens we crossed a bleak and barren mountain, and passing close to the ancient castle of Clot, which a labourer had bought for *assignats*, at the confiscation of the Marquis de Salle's estate, we fell into the road from Annecy to Geneva, and arrived at Secheron in the evening.

I was far from feeling, on this occasion, the alacrity I had generally experienced, in our other excursions: I knew that I was taking the last look at every object around, and that the curtain would soon be drawn between me and the lake, and the cultivated environs of Geneva, and the fertile hill sides of La Côte, and the snowy tops of the mighty Alps; I felt too, that we were soon to make the exertion of separating ourselves from a part of our family, that we were to quit the tranquil life we had led, and to venture on a world unknown. I have long had, and shall always retain great affection for Geneva. I think no people know so well how to make the most of life, or share so liberally the advantages of fortune, or bestow so cheerfully the little which can be spared, from the wants of nature, on the education and the amusements of their children; perhaps, too, none are more generally possessed of that various knowledge which can best enliven conversation, and convert the publick events of the passing day into subjects of interesting discussion: but if, in taking leave of them, I could presume to advise a whole people, I would exhort the Genevois, at the same time that they preserved, as much as possible, the observance of their ancient customs, and cherished the precious flame of national pride, to reconcile themselves to a change of government, which, together with some disadvantages, has certainly brought them peace and internal tranquillity: they are wrong to avoid their conquerors in social life, as carefully as the timid Arethusa did the pursuit of the god Alpheus: a cheerful submission might have some effect upon the mind of their mighty master: he himself has at times affected to be thought a man of letters, and might be rendered partial to the seat of Literature, and he might recollect, in a moment of good humour, that he in some measure promised, upon a former occasion, to respect and even to protect the independence of Geneva. It may one day occur to him that the existence of two or three little republicks, busily occupied in their own concerns, and safe under the shadow of his power, might afford him, in his moments of relaxation, so many objects of interesting contemplation: they might certainly engage his attention, and amuse him, as the exoticks of a hot house, or the curious animals of a menagerie do, and he might take a pleasure in following the operation of the diminutive states of Bienne, of Mulhausen, or of Geneva, as the family of Huber do the economy of a bee-hive, or the instinctive powers of the commonwealth of ants.

With respect to the advice I might wish to give the Genevans, I ought to observe, that it would in some instances, be unnecessary, as there are a few respectable families, who, either from resentment at the conduct of the popular party, during the revolution, or from the love of that tranquillity, which the misfortunes of their own country have taught them to believe was only to be found in the

bosom of Despotism, are not only satisfied to be the subjects of France, but are sincerely attached to their sovereign, the Emperour. I have even heard a lady, who is an enthusiastick admirer of his, assert, that she believed him to be an instrument in the hands of Providence for the good of mankind, and that the Angel of the Lord protected him. In one circumstance they are all agreed; they are tremblingly alive to the dread of the rod, which hangs over them: they would submit, with implicit obedience, to whatever the government, in its utmost caprice and wantonness of power might choose to order; and are careful, however they may indulge themselves in conversation, never to risk any opinion upon paper, which might give offence. An old acquaintance of mine, a man of spritely mind, and gentle manners, and such a counsellor in short, as Juvenal describes Crispus to have been, one who always went with the stream, is a member of the tribunate, and ventures now and then in a speech, which he very carefully prepares for the purpose, just to hint, that, perhaps, but he will not be certain, the great genius, who governs France, and whom he adorns upon the occasion, with all the flowers of rhetorick, might with propriety and advantage, suspend some intended measure; and the wonder, upon such occasions, at Geneva, is, that their countryman should have had so much courage, and that he should not have been sent to the Temple. On his return he is complimented not on his knowledge, and on his eloquence, which are deserving of every praise, but on his manly resolution; and his friends surround him with wonder and applause, as the Trojans did Hector, when he came back safe and unhurt from the much dreaded spear and the seven-fold shield of Ajax.

It is time, however, that I should cease to speak of Geneva, of which I might almost say what Mary of England did of Calais: but it is necessary that I should previously fulfil my promise, and give you some idea of the Genevan system of education, and of the state of Science and of Literature there. You would easily forgive me, I believe, if I did not fulfil it, but I should not forgive myself: for it is a tribute I owe to Geneva, and a tribute very easily paid by the assistance of Mr. Senebier's Literary History of Geneva.

For The Port Folio.

BIOGRAPHY.

Life of Dr. Johnson.

(*Continued from page* 316.)

His juvenile attachments to the fair sex, were various and transient. He paid his addresses, while at Stourbridge school, to Miss Olivia Lloyd, a young Quaker, and next to Lucy Porter, whose mother he married, in 1735. Mrs. P. was the widow of Mr. Porter, a mercer of Birmingham. It was a love-match on both sides, inspired, not by the beauty of form, but by a mutual admiration of each other's minds. Johnson's appearance was certainly very forbidding, as at that time, he was lean and tall, and the scars of the scrophula made his physiognomy hideous. Mrs. Porter was double his age, was very corpulent, had an uncommonly large bosom, and, according to Garrick, "she had florid red cheeks, produced by thick painting, and a liberal use of cordials." She was worth about 800*l.*, which

rendered her to a man in Johnson's circumstances, a desirable acquisition. He immediately hired a large house at Edial, near Litchfield, set up a private classical academy, and advertised for scholars; but the plan proved abortive, for the only pupils he acquired were the celebrated Garrick, then about eighteen, his brother George, and a Mr. Offeley, who died before he had completed his studies.

About this time he commenced his tragedy of *Irene;* and in the Spring of 1737, he resolved to try his fortune in London, being then in the twenty-eighth year of his age. Young Garrick came to town at the same time, with the intention of studying the profession of the law. Johnson, on his arrival, was much reduced in his circumstances, and was obliged to practise the most rigid economy. He took lodging in Exeter-street, where a poor Irish painter initiated him in the art of living cheaply, and whose true character he afterwards drew, as his *Ofellus* in the *Art of living in London.* In the course of this year he was introduced to Mr. Cave, who was his patron, and for many years his principal resource for employment. He also at this period, commenced his intimacy with the well-known Richard Savage.

The misfortunes and misconduct of Savage had, at this period, reduced him to the lowest state of indigence, and his only means of subsistence was by writing for the "Gentleman's Magazine," by which Johnson became acquainted with him, and being both equally destitute, they sympathized in each other's sufferings. It is a melancholy truth, that they were often so extremely poor as not to be able to pay for a lodging, and were, consequently obliged to traverse the streets for whole nights together.

In May, 1738, he published his excellent Poem, called "*London,*" written in imitation of the third Satire of Juvenal. He offered it to several booksellers, none of whom would purchase it; but at last, through the interest of Mr. Cave, Mr. Dodsley bought it of him for 10*l.* Pope highly admired this Poem, and prophesied the authour's future fame. It went through a second edition in the space of a week.

But the trade of writing was, upon the whole, so unprofitable, that Johnson made an effort to procure the situation of master of the free-school at Appleby, Leicestershire, the salary of which was 60*l.* a year. Pope exerted himself greatly to procure him this situation; but his project miscarried, and our authour was again thrown back upon the metropolis, where he continued his drudgery in the service of Cave, and produced a number of small tracts with astonishing rapidity. He composed the Parliamentary Speeches for the magazines, wrote a variety of Prefaces for different works, and in 1743, he was employed in making a catalogue of the Earl of Oxford's library, and in compiling the "Harleian Miscellany." In the same year, he published his excellent "Life of Savage," which was alone sufficient to establish his reputation. Yet on projecting, soon afterwards, a new edition of Shakspeare, he could find no friend to promote the subscription, and was obliged to abandon the project. Sir John Hawkins preserved a list of his schemes, thirty-nine of which he had formed in the course of his studies, but such was his want of encouragement,

that not one of them was ever executed.

In 1747, however, he published his "*Plan of a Dictionary of the English Language*," and addressed it to the celebrated Earl of Chesterfield; when several opulent booksellers having meditated a book of a similar kind, they agreed with Johnson to execute it, and the price stipulated was 1575*l*. The proprietors were Mr. Charles Hitch, Mr. Andrew Millar, Mr. Dodsley, the two Messrs. Longman, and the two Messrs. Knapton. Johnson had hitherto lived with his wife, in obscure courts and alleys about the Strand; but, in order to execute this arduous undertaking, he hired a house in Gough-square, fitted up one of the upper rooms like a counting-house, and employed there, six amanuenses, in transcribing, five of whom were Scotchmen.

In February, 1749, he finished his tragedy of Irene, and the theatre being then under the direction of Garrick, he had sufficient interest to get it put in rehearsal; during which, to attract the publick attention to his name, he published the "Vanity of Human Wishes," of which poem he was said to have composed seventy lines in one day, without putting one of them upon paper till they were finished. For this Poem, which is highly esteemed, he received from Dodsley only fifteen guineas.

His tragedy was produced on the 6th of February, 1749, after a serious dispute between him and the manager, with respect to some alterations, which the authour refused to make, though he at last conceded. Dr. Adams, who was present on the first night of its representation, gave Mr. Boswell the following account of its reception: "Before the curtain drew up, there were catcalls whistling, which alarmed Johnson's friends. The prologue, which was written by himself in a manly strain, soothed the audience, and the play went off tolerably till it came to the conclusion, when Mrs. Pritchard, the heroine of the piece, was to be strangled upon the stage, and was to speak two lines with the bowstring round her neck. The audience cried out Murder! murder! She several times attempted to speak, but in vain. At last she was obliged to go off the stage alive." Irene was represented on the twelve following nights, and the heroine was carried off to be put to death behind the scenes: but since that time, it has never been acted on any stage; and Johnson, from the unfavourable decision upon his tragedy, being convinced that his talents were not sufficient to allow him to write successfully for the stage, never afterwards made any attempt at dramatick composition.

It was towards the close of this year, that Lauder published his essay on "Milton's Use and Imitations of the moderns," in which he pretended that he had detected a multitude of plagiarisms in that authour. Johnson, it appears, from motives of enmity to the memory of Milton, at first assisted Lauder, but the imposition being detected by Dr. Douglas, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, he insisted on the impostor confessing his offence: and he at length signed a recantation, which was published in 1751. Johnson then abandoned him; when after having the folly and wickedness to deny his apology, he went to Barbadoes, where he died.

While he was employed in his Dictionary, he projected the Rambler, which first made its appear-

ance on the 20th of March, 1750, and was continued regularly every Tuesday and Friday, till the 17th of March, 1752, when it was stopped. In this publication he received little assistance, it having been all written by himself, except five numbers: these were No. 10, by Mrs. Chapone: No. 30, by Mrs. Talbot; No. 97, by Richardson; and Nos. 44, and 100, by Miss Carter.

About this period, Johnson's circumstances were far from easy; yet he received as a constant visitor at his house, Miss Anna Williams, the daughter of a Welch physician, who possessed considerable literary talents, and had just lost her sight. Having been intimate with his wife, Johnson insisted on her retaining an apartment in his house, and Garrick in 1755, gave her a benefit, which produced 200*l.* In 1766, she published a volume of miscellanies in quarto, by which she increased her stock to 300*l.*, and this little fund, with the assistance of Johnson, supported her during the remainder of her life.

Soon after he had finished the "*Rambler*," he experienced a loss which afflicted him in the most sensible manner. On the 17th of March, O. S. his wife died, after a cohabitation of seventeen years. She was buried in the chapel at Bromley, which was under the care of his friend Dr. Hawkesworth; and the poignant distress of Johnson in consequence of this event, is said to have been indescribable. She left, by her first husband, a daughter, who has been already mentioned, and a son who was a captain in the navy, and who at his death left his sister 10,000*l*,

In May, 1752, preparatory to his relinquishment of mourning, he composed a prayer for the repose of his wife, and resumed his literary labours on the Dictionary, though he occasionally assisted Dr. Hawkesworth, in his publication of the Adventurer, which was commenced on the 7th of November, 1752, and continued twice a week, till March the 9th, 1754. Thornton, who assisted him in the beginning, soon withdrew, and set up a new paper called the Connoisseur.

His early patron, Mr. Cave, died in January 1754, and Johnson showed his gratitude by writing his life, which was published in the Gentleman's Magazine. His Dictionary was also finished towards the end of this year, and made its appearance in 1756. Previous to its publication, the University of Oxford anticipating the excellence of the work, and at the solicitation of his friend Mr. Warton, unanimously conferred on him the degree of Master of Arts, which, though it had been refused to him at a former period, was considered as an honour by that establishment.

In this year, he assisted Mr. Zachariah Williams, father of the blind lady lately mentioned, by writing for him the account of his attempts to ascertain the Longitude. He had vainly hoped to receive a reward from Parliament for his exertions, but failing in his expectations, he died shortly afterwards, in the 83d year of his age.

During the progress of his Dictionary, Johnson having spent the money, for which he had contracted to write it, he was again under the necessity of exerting his talents in order to procure the means of subsistence. His principal resources now were the subscriptions for his edition of Shakspeare, and the profits of his miscellaneous

writings, which, however, were not sufficient to secure him from an arrest for the trifling sum of 5*l.* 18s. a debt which Richardson sent him the money to discharge.

His mind having been long oppressed by constant exertion, seemed now to require an interval of repose:—but indolence to him was dangerous, for when his spirits were not actively employed, they turned with hostility against him, and he nearly sunk under the pressure of his melancholy indisposition. He always reflected with severity upon his own life and conduct, and wishing to be immaculate he destroyed his peace by unnecessary scruples. He observes, that on surveying his own life, he could discover nothing but a barren waste of time, with some disorders of body and disturbances of mind, very nearly allied to madness; that his life from his earliest years, was wasted in a morning-bed, and his prevailing sin was a general sluggishness, to which he had always been inclined; and in part of his life almost compelled, by the attacks of his never-failing disease, and the consequent weariness of his mental faculties. Indeed it appears that from the time of his consultation with Dr. Swinfen, already alluded to, he was never free from apprehension of the worst calamity with which human nature can be afflicted, and which, like the sword of the tyrant suspended over his guest, kept him for the remainder of his life in a state of the most dreadful suspense.

(To be Continued.)

For The Port Folio.

POLITE LITERATURE.

It is difficult to make a true estimate of things; for although what is absolutely immoral can never obtain any countenance from a good man, some of the weaknesses of human nature, if considered in their consequences, will appear to be valuable ingredients in our present condition, and no mean argument of the wisdom of providence. A sanguine temper, to a person of experience and reflection, is apt to appear unwise, and not at all suited to the nature of things; and perhaps he could show that the vast expectations which people of that temper commonly indulge must necessarily be disappointed in the course of human life, and consequently become a source of unhappiness. We will listen to the voice of discretion, and treasure up the admonitions of the prudent, but still congratulate the man whose native hilarity disposes him to view the bright side of things, and make the most of his situation.

The suspicious soul that has become a fright to itself, envies at the same time that it censures; and if nature would admit of such barter, would gladly exchange its squinting philosophy for the perennial flow of jocund spirits. It is natural to put the best face we can upon our own infirmities; but a desponding temper is so miserable, as well as weak, that I should think that nobody would be proud of it. The happiness of acting, which seems to be principally intended in our formation, is lost; and it would be hard to conceive that the damage can ever be repaired by suffering, which is the only part that remains for a man to act (pardon the expression) while he consults only his fears and lives by rule of hesitation. However he may console himself by a comparison with foolish, daring and abortive heroism, his pusillanimity will ever remain as incompatible with happiness as it is with virtue.

Abundant spirits is one of the characters of youth, and although they may exceed the immediate calls of duty, as the luxuriance of vegetation disdains a strict proportion to the expected increase, they are not lavished in vain. It is then that the mind is formed for enterprise and animated with views that nothing but the magick of an unworn fancy can exhibit. Not only natural scenes array themselves in richer colouring, or more astonishing sublimity, but the business of life assumes a thousand nameless attractions in so advantageous a perspective. Let the merchant, the soldier, or the pleader, for instance, who has reached the calm of life, and by various experience qualified himself to make an estimate of its pursuits, recollect his first impressions, and compare the anticipations (call them the dreams) of adventurous youth with the corrected sentiments of age, and say how much he is indebted to the former for the great design, or the resolute execution, that has made his fortune, or perhaps insured his fame.

It is well known to men of reflection that there is something like illusion in the more interesting objects of desire or attention; and that such overpowering influence is necessary to the business of human life. In youth we are most susceptible of this influence; and we should consider the affections and determination of that early period, as the first formation of a force proportioned to the successive exertions of forty or fifty years; or the radical vigour that is to supply a timely growth, and ultimately display itself in full maturity of character. Pleasure is then predominant; and as it is not embarrassed by the reserves and counterpassions which commonly take place in a longer course of experience, it hurries on to its object and engages the concurrence of every faculty. But the imagination, the inseparable attendant and prompter of a sanguine temper, dresses the object in the most suitable colours, and places it in an attitude that commands every avenue to the heart. By excluding other things with which it might be compared, it acquires a sovereign importance and grows big with the promise of every thing excellent or desirable. Hence an attachment, a devotedness, that makes no account of any difficulties that may intervene, and makes itself sure of a complete indemnification in the accomplishment of its main purpose.

The youthful mind not only conceives pleasing images, and such as make a flattering representation of things in general, but fixes upon some one object with a fond partiality. In his view this object has more than the advantages of optical representation. It is not only nearer and larger, but its form becomes more imposing. The medium of his contemplation superadds elegance to what is otherwise unsightly, and invests even deformity in the charms of rainbow-drapery. What wonder then if his preference is decided, his attachment inviolable? He has already been more than agreeably entertained, and the pleasure with which he makes those early advances toward a profession, he considers as the first fruits of a harvest that is to combine the conveniences of wealth with the gratification of his ruling passion; as a small object by being brought very near the eye may exclude the heaven and the earth, and with a little assistance of the imagination may seem bigger than either, so the

near view, the partial view, the fond view, that he takes of his object makes it seem everything to him; and whatever delusion may be implied in it, I say it is well for the business of human life, that it commences with such views and such impressions.

Every state and condition is attended with difficulties. I have sometimes thought that if we could foresee the sad seasons and the corroding cares of matrimony the population of the world would suffer a diminution; but as this part of the universal plan is executed by means of an expectation pleasing beyond all others, so we are engaged in the pursuits of active or studious life by an agreeable prepossession that is not at all disposed to anticipate difficulties, or to admit any considerations that might damp the ardour of enterprise. Not only in the progress of a profession will difficulties occur, but at the commencement there is commonly something of the kind that would turn the scale of cold deliberation, and in many instances frustrate the designs of nature or education. But the purpose has been formed, or rather, the mind has recognized its object, and in that object it sees something so persuasively charming, or so strikingly great, that nothing would give him more pain than a relinquishment of it. Hence a degree of exertion that nothing but the desire of happiness could prompt, or the prospect of happiness maintain.

I do not know that human nature in any form bespeaks a more cordial congratulation, or demands a readier tribute of good wishes, than in that of a young man, modestly daring to distinguish himself from the crowd, and to claim a part of more than ordinary importance on the stage of human affairs. I love him for the generous motive that combines his happiness and his usefulness in one and the same object, and admire the wisdom of divine providence in accomplishing the dictates of duty by the aid of instinct.

It is found that a mere sense of duty is hardly ever sufficient; and as in every other case a sort of self-gratification mingles itself with a prompt and faithful performance, so in this it is not only necessary, but sometimes predominates so as to spoil the effect. For we must not suppose, because a flow of spirits, and sanguine hopes, are both natural and necessary at the outset of life that they never run wild, and ruin the business that they were intended to execute. However, I say, as duty is commonly attended with difficulty; and more especially as the first essay of a profession, or a course of life, is arduous, we ought to consider the natural enthusiasm of a youthful mind as a provision which in the nature of things could not be dispensed with, and which therefore, with a thousand other instances, declares the wisdom with which the designs of the Creator are executed.

Not only does the heart of a parent dilate at the blooming promise, the generous complexion of juvenile ardour, but every body regards it with something more than approbation, and follows the stripling, in idea, to the scene of action with a fond concern for his success; and those engaging appearances which call forth his good wishes are a sort of earnest of their accomplishment, for such is the meaning of nature.

I should not expect that a cold-hearted boy would ever grow up into a man of character. I should

not expect that a calculating youth would ever venture to be great. Nature does not stint those sons whom she means to own. The excellence of manhood results from the exuberance of an earlier period; and it is only the noble impetuosity, the living fire of youth, that can triumph over discouragements, and take its last form in the mild lustre of a respectable old age. M. L.

VARIETY.

In the rough blast heaves the billow,
In the light air waves the willow;
Every thing of moving kind
VARIES with the veering wind:
What have I to do with thee,
Dull, unjoyous Constancy?

Sombre tale, and satire witty,
Sprightly glee, and doleful ditty,
Measur'd sighs, and roundelay,
Welcome all! but do not stay.
What have I to do with thee,
Dull, unjoyous Constancy?

MOUNTEBANK.

An adventurer of this description, in the reign of King George the first, having collected an audience, he addressed them in the following words:

"Being originally a native of this place, I have for a long time been considering, in what manner I can best show my regard for my brother townsmen; and after maturely weighing the subject, I am come to a resolution of making a present of five shillings to every inhabitant of the parish; it will, I own, be a heavy expense, and I hope no one will attempt to profit from my liberality, who is not really and truly a parishioner."

The multitude pressed forward with open eyes, as well as mouths, casting earnest looks on a green velvet bag, of ample dimensions, which hung on the arm of this generous man.

"I know you are not so sordid," continued the oratour, "and so mercenary, as to value my bounty merely because it would put a few shillings into your pockets; the pleasure I see sparkling in your eyes, cannot be produced at the thought of dirty pelf, which today is in your hands, and tomorrow may be in the gripe of a miser, a highwayman, or a pawnbroker.

"I perceive what it is that delights you: the discovering in one whom you considered as a stranger, the warmest and most disinterested friend you ever had in your lives. Money, my good people, too often tempts the young and the indiscreet to indulge in liquor, and other excesses, to the destruction of their health and understanding.

"In order, therefore, to prevent what I meant for a benefit, from being converted into an injury, I freely present to every brother townsman, *(dipping his hand into the green velvet bag)* this inestimable packet, which contains a box of pills, a paper of powders, and a plaister, which has not its fellow in Europe, for violent bruises and green wounds, whether by knife, sword or pistol.

"If applied on the patient's going to bed, I pledge my reputation, that the ball, if there is one, shall be extracted, and the flesh be as sound as the palm of my hand before morning.

"But for those who dislike the pain and smart of such things as plaisters and ointment, and who are not fond of trouble, let me recommend the powder; it acts, ladies and gentlemen, by sympathy, and was the joint invention of three of the greatest medical men that ever lived, Galen, Hippocrates, and Paracelsus. If you have a few grains only of this powder in your possession, you may, with-

out fear, rush into the thickest of the battle, and defy broad-sword, pike, or bayonet.

"All I say is, get wounded, get crippled, get mangled and hacked, like a crimped cod; the longer, the deeper, the more numerous the cuts are, the better shall I be pleased, the more decisive is the proof it will afford of the merits of my invaluable powder.

"Give yourself no sort of uneasiness, only wrap the part affected in a clean white handkerchief; then get to bed, and to sleep *as soon as you can;* in the meantime, let the weapon which did the injury be rubbed nine times with a small quantity of the powder, and take my word for it, you may follow your usual occupations the next day.

"Of the pills I need say nothing; they have long pronounced their own panegyrick, and there are full directions sealed up with them; but as you live rather out of the way of the great world, it is but fair to tell you, that they procure husbands for single women, and children for those who are married; they are great sweetners of the blood, and wonderful improvers of the complexion." *(I will not fatigue my readers by continuing his display of the virtues of his medicines; it was too long, too elaborate, and too minute, to be repeated in this place.)*

"The selling price of these matchless remedies," said the doctor, "has been six shillings *for time immemorial*, but as I am resolved to stand to my word, and as I do not practise physick for the love of dirty lucre, if you will throw up your handkerchiefs, with the small sum of one shilling tied in each, merely to pay travelling charges and servants' wages, I freely make you a present of the rest of the money, according to my original promise.

"Besides medicines, which no master of a family, nor indeed any one who values his life and limbs ought to be without, the favourite of fortune will be entitled to a superb and elegant piece of massy plate." *(This attractive article was immediately brought forward and displayed.)*

A small number of the crowd, who were so absurd as to doubt anything the doctor said, beginning to smell a rat, marched off in silence, but the mass was not formed of materials capable of resisting so complicated an attack on their feelings and understandings; the present of a crown to each man at first so confidently promised, had dissipated all fear of imposition; for how could one who acted so much like a gentleman, be supposed to want to *take them in.*

His ostentatious palaver had diffused a magick ray over his powder of post, his rosin, and his jalap; for the passive infatuation of being cheated, is not without its pleasures; and the superb piece of plate glittering in their eyes, and dazzling their reason, completed the conquest of the impostor.

He was proceeding in his address, but a shower of shillings interrupted his harangue, and two hours were fully occupied in easing his *brother townsmen* of their silver, and emptying the green velvet bag of the *six shilling packets;* while his assistants diverted the anxieties, and allayed the impatience of the people, by musick and tumbling.

Handkerchiefs from all quarters dropped round the cunning knave; inhabitants of Brentford or Kensington, Chelsea, Turnham, or any other green were *permitted* to

contribute their shillings, without any ill-natured questions being asked, concerning the place of their residence.

The business of the day concluded with general satisfaction, as those who did not get the rich prize, possessed that which was nearly equal in value; and the artist owned, at an inn, in the evening, over a duck and green peas, that the neat profit of his afternoon was five and twenty guineas.

"At a moment, too," says a cynick, who is fond of catching at every opportunity for establishing an impious theory, "at a moment," says the snarler, "when a miserable subordinate member of the profession, in full view of the mountebank, and toiling *at his triple oar*, had booked only ten shillings, of which seven and sixpence came under the description of debts irrecoverably bad; perhaps a worthy character, qualified by parts and attainments, for the task he undertook, and who had sunk his little fortune, in furnishing himself with the means of instruction."

I agree that the description of the satirist *may* be correct, but I will not allow him to pronounce, on the fate of the two characters; or, as he is so very fond of doing, to arraign the wisdom and justice of Providence; nor indeed can he do it with justice, till both individuals are traced to the end of their journey through life.

Authorised by general experience, and the logick of probabilities, the impudent and fraudulent quack, dissipating his substance, as such animals frequently do, in riot and profusion, it is neither rash nor uncharitable, to say, that his last scene was at the gallows.

The professional man, who beheld with a tranquil eye, fools listening to a rogue, after treading the regular and satisfactory path of duty and useful occupation, probably past his last moments in the calm confidence of hope; looking up with thankfulness to the Almighty, for competence and content, and for enabling him to exert his faculties usefully in that rank of life, in which Providence had placed him.

TRANSLATION

Of the Chorus at the End of the Second Act of the Hecuba of Euripides.

Ye breezes, mild and gentle gales,
Whose breath propitious fills the swelling sails,
And bids the vessel swiftly glide
Through angry seas, and stem the stubborn tide;
O! whither, whither will ye bear me hence,
To haughty power a slave and lawless insolence?

Will ye, alas! in Dorick lands,
Subject me to some haughty Greek's commands?
Or waft me to the fertile coast
Of Pthia, where in wandring mazes lost,
Apidanus pours forth his silver floods
Through meads of verdant hue, and shadowy darkling woods.
Or must I to the Isle repair,
Sacred to Latona's care,
Where verdant laurels and the lofty pine,
Their friendly shades and blooming branches join,
And with the youthful choir's united lays,
Raise the chaste voice in fair Diana's praise.

For lofty Athens must I part,
To shade the curious vest with nicest art;
To paint Minerva's glorious car,
Adorn the tapestry with scenes of war,
Or point the forked bolt with flaming rage,
On Titans hurled, that durst Heaven's awful King engage.

See blazing fires from hapless Ilion rise,
While clouds of circling smoke obscure the skies;
O dire distress! why only am I left;
Of children, parents, brethren, all bereft,
Why thus reserved a prey for lawless hands,
To drag the galling chain far hence in foreign lands?

STANZAS,

On reading the following Inscription on a delightful vacant Cottage at Binsted, in the Isle of Wight.

"CONTENTMENT IS WEALTH."

And art thou fled, romantick host?
Thy airy hopes at once bely'd?
Contentment's clue forever lost,
And life the sport of Fortune's tide!

Such still their fate, who idly dream
In court or cot th' enchantress dwells;
Hangs o'er the cool meandering stream,
Or slumbers in monastick cells.

Tho' Freedom guard the Monarch's throne,
And innocence the cottage grace;
Dwells, in the mind, her spells alone,
Unchang'd by circumstance or place!

If, stranger! such thy inmate prove
On peaceful plain or stormy sea,
Or in this sweet sequester'd grove,
Contentment shall be wealth to thee!

LANGOIRAN,

A sensible Hugonot, and a subject of Charles the ninth, king of France.

Several months before the massacre of Saint Bartholomew's day, it was the execrable policy of the Catholicks, to sooth the fears of the Protestants, and lull their apprehensions by kindness and attention, which appeared too over-acted to be real.

Of this opinion was the subject of my present article; puzzled and alarmed by the conduct of these inveterate foes, and after considering the subject in every point of view, he resolved to emigrate; but previous to his departure, called on the worthy Coligni, to take his leave.

The admiral remonstrated with Langoiran, on his rash determination, called his suspicions groundless, frequently repeating to him, "My friend Langoiran, why will you not remain with us? I tell you your fears are foolish." "I choose rather," said the fugitive, "to save myself with fools, than to stay and perish with men wiser than myself."—The fatal event amply justified his fears and his precaution.

It ought not to be suppressed, that on this bloody and nefarious occasion, there were Catholicks who refused to cooperate with the merciless myrmidons of the vatican. Of this number was the generous and humane D'Ortez. "I have read," said the gallant viscount, "the letter, enjoining a massacre of the Hugonots, to the inhabitants of Bayonne; but they turned away with horrour and indignation; your majesty has many faithful subjects, but not a single assassin in that city."

LA REINE BOIT,

The queen drinks, a ceremonial exclamation used on certain festive occasions in France, under the old monarchy.

The first time that Voltaire's tragedy of Mariamne was performed, a cup of poison being administered, just at the point of its being drank, a rogue in the pit exclaimed, "*La reine boit*, which producing a universal burst of laughter, actually stopt the piece; a few years after, the authour hit on another method of despatching his heroine, and the play succeeded to his satisfaction.

This exclamation was also made use of by a courtier in the train of Mary de Medicis, who was soused in the Seine in consequence of her boat oversetting; it was thought a tolerable sally of extempore wit, at a moment when a fear of being drowned would have damped, if not have extinguished, the faculties of most men.

TO A LATE PRIMROSE,

By Lockhart Muirhead, A. M.

Weep not, modest child of Spring,
Lone, unpitied in the dell,
Snatch the joys the Graces bring,
Bid thy tufted haunts farewell.

'Reft of kindred, wherefore stay?
Other flowrets paints the vale,
Vernal Zephyrs fade away,
Sultry vapours taint the gale.

Come, my Emma's breast adorn!
Give to her thy blossom rare;
Emma sooths the fair forlorn,
Emma cheers the child of care.

Wanton now around thy tomb,
Catch the smile, and catch the sigh,
Rescued from the grove of gloom,
Happy Primrose, live—and die.

REMEDY FOR IDLENESS.

In the beginning of the fifteenth century, John, Duke of Burbon, dispatched an especial messenger to England, with the following singular challenge. "That he would at an appointed day, accompanied by sixteen knights, equally indifferent to life or death as himself, meet as many English chevaliers, and fight it out with them, till all on one side or other were defeated and destroyed; *in order to avoid idleness*, and merit the good graces of his mistress."

ORIGINAL POETRY.

For The Port Folio.

THE NATURAL BRIDGE,

A POEM,

BY JOHN DAVIS.

When Fancy from the azure skies
On earth came down, before unseen:
She bade the wond'rous structure rise,
And haply chose this sylvan scene.

The Graces, too, with spritely air,
Assisted in the work divine;
The arch they form'd with nicest care,
And made the murm'ring stream incline.

Then Fancy from the pile above,
Would gaze with rapture, bending o'er;
And charm'd behold the streamlet rove,
While Echo mock'd its feeble roar.

And here, perhaps, the Indian stood,
With uplift hands, and eye amaz'd;
As sudden from th' ascending wood,
He first upon the fabrick gaz'd.

Wrapt in these shades I love to rest;
Hid from the world, the world from me;
And oh! what transport fills the breast
Amid this solemn scenery.

Lo! here the scarcely waving trees
An awful stillness throw around;
Safe shelter'd from the chiding breeze,
That dies upon the higher ground.

See on their bark the lover true,
Has carv'd the maiden's hallow'd name,
Whose kindling glance from eyes of blue,
Awak'd the soft resistless flame.

And here the print of Mary's feet
Has mark'd the violet's fragrant dew,
When, stealing round her love to meet,
Her lips to his with passion grew.

And here the dove has built her nest,
And soft repos'd her silver plume;
And here the hum-bird's painted breast
Has hover'd o'er the flowret's bloom.

See Tadmor's domes and halls of state,
In undistinguish'd ruin lie;
See Rome's proud empire yield to fate,
And claim the mournful pilgrim's sigh.

But while relentless Time impairs
The monuments of crumbling art;
This pile unfading beauty wears,
Eternal in its ev'ry part.

MERRIMENT.

A tradesman pressing a gentleman very much for payment of his bill, the latter said "You need not be in so great a hurry, I am not going to run away." "I do not imagine you are, Sir," returned the tradesman, "*but I am!*"

In a mixed company, a gentleman thought proper to make some remarks to the lady next him (who happened to be drinking toast and water), as to induce the affronted damsel to take out the toast and throw it in his face. He very coolly took it up, and threw it in the face of the person on the other side of him desiring that Miss—'s *toast might go round.*

A formal fellow inquiring for Mr. Owen, asked if Mr. O—n was at home? "N—o," replied the boy.

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